

STANDING COMMITTEES:
Natural Resources & Energy, Chair
Transportation & Veterans Affairs



JOINT COMMITTEES
Audit Committee, Co-Chair
Information Policy and Technology

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 1, 2015

For More Information Contact:
Senator Cowles
at 800-334-1465

GOVERNOR WALKER SIGNS COWLES BILL TO PHASE OUT MICROBEADS

New Law Will Improve Wisconsin's Waters

MADISON- Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay) issued the following statement following Governor Walker's signing of Senate Bill 15, co-authored with Rep. Mary Czaja (R-Irma), which will phase out the manufacture and sale of products containing microbeads in Wisconsin:

"Today we are one step closer to removing small plastic contaminants from Wisconsin's lakes and rivers. This bipartisan legislation, backed by industry and conservation groups in the state, takes necessary measures to reduce and eventually eliminate microbeads from being released into the environment."

Microbeads are tiny, non-biodegradable plastic particles that are used in the manufacture of some personal care products, such as face washes and toothpastes, due to their exfoliating properties. They are nonessential additives since natural alternatives such as apricot and pecan shell particles, oatmeal and other biodegradable ingredients are available for use in exfoliating products.

Several industry leaders have already voluntarily committed to removing microbeads from their personal care products.

"This legislation creates a level playing field and requires all of the personal care products industry to remove microbeads and protect our state's waterbodies."

"I would like to thank Dr. Lorena M. Rios, Assistant Professor of Chemistry at the University of Wisconsin-Superior, for her continued research on plastics and for focusing that research in recent years on the Great Lakes. Thanks to her work, and the work of her colleagues and students, we now know what potential threat plastic particles could cause to Wisconsin's lakes ecology and potential human health concerns have been identified. Due to this research we were able to craft a bill to safeguard our lakes including the largest freshwater resource in the world."

###